

A
S E R M O N

Preacht in

Bridgewater,

The next day after the

E L E C T I O N
O F
B U R G E S S E S ,

F E B R U A R Y 27. 1681.

BY
WILLIAM ALLEN, B.D. and Vicar of
Bridgewater, Somerset.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. S. in the Year 1681.

2 F R M O N

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To the Worshipful
RICHARD CAN MAYOR,
John Gilbert Senior, and John Harey,
Aldermen of the Burrough of Bridgewater.

Gentlemen,

THe Presenter of this Epistle is very much
the Servant of Col. Ralph Stawel; as
any man must needs be, that loves either
his Prince or his Countrey, and has the Honour to
know that worthy Gentleman. He has likewise
the Happiness to be of the acquaintance of the
Minister that Preached this ensuing Sermon. Now
knowing full well how great a Reverence and
Esteem your Worships have for the Honourable
Colonel, and this Reverend Divine, this your
Supplicant could do no better than recommend the
Honourable Colonel, and the Reverend Divine
aforesaid, to your Fatherly Care and Protection.

It is most certain that the Generous Colonel has
been extremely abused behind his back, by some
that he deserved better from, upon occasion of the
late Election; and the Divine likewise hath borne
his part in Reproaches about his late Sermon. I

The Epistle Dedicatory.

am not a person to name People, in any case of scandal; and therefore I shall content my self to give your Worships a Hint of what passed lately concerning these Gentlemen, and leave the rest to your Worships Wisdom and Consideration.

It is said for a certain, that in some Company not unknown to your Worships, upon occasion of Discourse with some People of this Neighbourhood, there were some very ill words spoken, and ill things done by a Knave, a Fool, and a Cuckold, with relation to the Noble Colonel, and this worthy Divine. If you can either guess at the Men, or if you have heard of the thing, this is humbly to beg of you, that you will interpose your Discretion and Authority in the matter, that it may go no further; and that you will be pleased to keep this to your selves. This comes from a man that must be nameless, and that beseeches you over and over, not to let either the Fool, the Knave, or the Cuckold (if you should happen to stumble upon them) to have any knowledge how This comes to your hand.

The Lord have you in his keeping.

PROVERBS 21. v. 15.

It is a Joy to the Just to do Judgment.

I*T would be happy with the World, (says Plato) were Kings Philosophers, or Philosophers Kings; Their Wisdom instructing them in all the Methods of Peace, and their Tempers more than inclining them to the practice of them. But we have a more sure word of Prophecy to give heed to, and a greater than Plato tells us, that Righteousness exalteth a Nation. When it goeth well with the righteous, the City rejoyces; and by the Blessing of the upright the City is exalted. But it is one of the greatest plagues can befall a People, or a Body-politick, when Children are given to be their Princes, and Babes shall rule over them; and that not so much in Age, as Understanding: And yet that defect would not be so mischievous neither, if they had honest hearts, and that it were a joy to them, as just, to do Judgment. And this refers not so much to Kings as Supreme, as to those that are in Authority under them. And happy would it have been for this Kingdom, if the Righteousness established by its Laws had been the measures of subordinate Magistrates proceedings; and that it had been a Joy to them, as just both to God and their King, to have done Judgment. In accounting for the words, which is the Wiseman's Doctrinal remark, I shall undertake to shew these following Truths;*

Pro. 14. 34.
& II. 11.
Isai. 3. 4.

1. *First.* That an Habitual Righteousness, or Justice of Minde, fits a man for Government, or doing Judgment, if call'd to it as a Magistrate.
2. *Secondly.* That the People rejoyce in the Administrations of such men, thus qualified, to whom it is a joy to do Judgment.
3. *Thirdly.* We are to consider the Satisfaction the Just man, or Magistrate, hath in doing Judgment.

It is a Joy to the Just to do Judgment.

In accounting for the first, I say, That the Holy and Righteous God is the great Rector of the World: He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and because He is Holy and Righteous, all things are dispensed in Number, Weight and Measure. And tho' there are some Intrigues in his Providence, and *Arcana's* of Kingdom, which we cannot fathom or comprehend, *Rom. 11. 33* For his Judgments, or procedures, are past finding out; yet every thing is ordered [*ἡ βουλὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ*] according to the Council of his Will, which is not arbitrary, but according to his own Wisdome, Justice and Goodness. And as the Kingly Prophet declares God to be Judge; so the Father of the faithful assures, that the Judge of all the Earth will do right. 'Tis he alone that by his Power and Wisdome prevents and defeats many of those Designs of Mischiefe, that evil Spirits or evil men would plague the world withal.

And as 'tis He that sometimes turns the hearts of Princes, [*which are in his hands*] as the Rivers of waters; so it is he that stills the raging of the people, and brings to light the hidden works of darkness. And what no eye can see, but the *All-seeing One*, he exposeth to open view.

Those

Those Malefactors which come not under the Cognisance of humane Judicatures, He brings forth to the Bar. And we know by Experience, that the *Treasure* some time since directed against the Lord's Anointed, and the murderous Hostilities of others committed against their Brethren, hath been by a wonderful Providence detected, even to the astonishment of the world.

In these and the like other instances, God may be said to execute his Vengeance, and declare that he himself is Judge: And by such extraordinary proceedings convince the world of that excellent Saying of the Psalmist, *Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain.* Psalm 127. 1.

Neither hath he given us proofs only of his Governing the World, in remarkable Examples of his Punitive Justice; but in the expressions of his Grace and Mercy towards those that love and fear him: by rewarding their Virtue, in advancing their Persons; by making them conspicuous and great in the world, glorious in mens eyes, as well as gracious in his.

And because he is Righteous, he pleads the Cause of the Fatherless and of the Widow, and hears their Prayers when they cry unto him, and avengeth the wrong done unto them, when others concern'd, either would not, or could not. And ever when it consists with the innocent and injured's real advantage, (which God knows best) he delivers them out of all their troubles. So that, though he reserve many things for the determination of the great Day of Retribution; yet that all may know, that there is a God that *now* judgeth the earth, he makes men *even now* sensible, that in *this* world they are rewarded according to their Works. And every mans own Conscience tells him, though none else is conscious of it, that

A Sermon on Prov. 21. v. 15.

that God to him is just, and righteous in all his dealings. But though God be Judge, and that eminently so, and the righteous Judge, yet hath he deputed Men as his Substitutes; the King as Supreme under him, and other Magistrates as ordained by the King. Magistracy, which is but a Power over others for a common Good, is a pious and primitive Institution derivative from God, the great and sole Monarch of the World: *First* founded in the Paternal Relation, and *that* afterward expanded but as Families increas'd.

And Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the first Commandment with promise, engageth us equally, if not more, to Obedience to the Pater Patriæ, to Kings and Queens, as Nursing-Fathers and Nursing-Mothers, as to our proximate or dearest Relatives. And therefore the *Hypothesis* of *Hobbes* and *Calvin*, are as absurd as mischievous, in making Kings and Magistrates the creatures of the People. *Justin* the Heathen tells us, *Principio rerum Gentium Nationumque Imperium penes Reges erat*: That in the beginning of time the Government of the World, in all the Kingdoms of it, was managed by Kings and Monarchs.

I say, both profane and Scripture-History assure us, that Kingly Government was the first Establishment. And though the *Mosaical* Government be urged as a refutation of this proposal, yet it is rejoyned, that *that* was a *Theocrasie*; nay and as humane it was Monarchical too, for *Moses* is said to be King in *Jesurun*. And it is evident from *Josephus* and the *Machabees*, and other Writers, that when that people fell under the Government of a *Sanhedrim*, that is, a *Presbytery*, they soon fell into ruine, and became not a people. But not to animadvert upon their Misfortunes, nor to make that an Argument

ment of the Justice or Injustice of any particular *Polity* ; It is very clear from the Records of the first Times, that the Government of a Commonwealth is but an Apostacy from (if not a Rebellion against) the first Model. And as Christ said of *Polygamy*, that *from the beginning it was not so* ; the like may we affirm of the whoredom of *Republicks*. And as the one was but permitted the Jews, so the other at this day is but permitted of God, for the hardness of mens hearts.

Having thus by the way adjusted the Right of Monarchical Government, and withal shewed you, that *that* Government, *more than any*, is from God ; and that persons entrusted with it, *bear* his Authority, and as they are his Vicegerents, they are to do his work, and to personate a Righteous God ; which Righteousness *they* are to display in the vindication of Gods Honour, in the defence of Gods Laws, in the protection of Gods people, in the punishment of Gods enemies ; and this must be done with respect to God as the chief Judge, to the common good as the subordinate end ; and that for the discharge of their own Consciences, as they will give an account of their Stewardship at the great Day of Judgment. So likewise Under-Magistrates are the Kings Vicegerents, and *their* Righteousness consists in *this* ; not only in being true to their God, but faithful to their King : In preserving his Prerogatives, in defending his Person, in promoting his Honour, in executing his Laws, and every way in their places securing the present Establishment. Which brings me to the Second *Particular* general.

Secondly. The peoples Security and Satisfaction in such Governours, or Rulers : *They will do Judgment*, and therefore all Good and Loyal men will bless God
for

for such a Prince, and such Magistrates ; because they are at once assured of God's protection, and their King's, and those that are employ'd and authoris'd by both : now (if ever) shall they lead their lives in all Godliness, Peaceableness, and Honesty. Blessed certainly are the people that are in such a case ! For as Children are often blessed for the Piety of their Parents , and according to God's own promise it is to descend to many generations: So for the sake of *David*, a Prince and Ruler after God's own heart, *Judah* shall be blessed. And though indeed for ~~his~~ sins the Land did mourn , yet upon his Repentance they and ~~he~~ were restored to God's favour. And why may I not make this Remark [by the way,] that for the sake of our late English *David*, for the Piety and Constancy of *Charles* the First, the Defender of the Faith, yea of that Faith once delivered to the Saints , and that even to the Death, God in mercy remembered the sinful People of this Land, and knock'd off those Chains we enthrall'd our selves in ; and brought us out of the Land of *Egypt*, out of the house of Bondage, and disabled our many *Pharaohs* and their Hosts from making us a continued prey ?

Why may we not impute the Blessings we now enjoy in the many years of our now lawful *Prince*, and ~~those~~ to the Prayers and Piety of that Glorious Martyr, whose Memory ought to be dear and precious to us ? And would to God that all the Subordinate Magistrates of this Realm, who hold their Power by Patent-Royal, would defend the same Faith, as he and his Successour do, and worship God faithfully in the same way , and plead for, and Christianly and courageously appear for that Righteousness which is established by a Law : then might we the people of

Isa. 43. 18. this Realm confidently hope, that our *Peace should*
be

be as a River; and our Righteousness as the waves of the Sea.

For this satisfaction would farther insue, (that the Inhabitants of the Land, and every distinct Corporation, and every Member of the same) that they might sit peaceably under their own Vines, and eat the Fruit of their Labours. And that satisfaction shall arise not only from God's promise given to a people so* governed, but from the confidence we shall have in such Governours: For they that will not act contrary to God's Law, nor to *Magna Charta*, that will not be imposed upon against the Law of the Nation, and the Religion establish'd by Law, they will be a terrour to Evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. And when we are thus guarded by God's Blessing and the Magistrates Power, a wall of Brass or of Fire cannot be more our Security, than this double Bulwark of Defence.

Besides this Security, *and in it*, this satisfaction from such just Rulers would arise, that the Hypocrites in *Sion* would tremble, and be afraid. The resolved and exemplary Loyalty both to God and the King, in such men, would awe the most impudent and daring Delinquents into a sneakiness of temper, and into an external, thô not a real compliance. The same Bravery and Goodness of Minde in a private person, we by experience finde, puts oftentimes a check upon the most dissolute and disaffected. Naked and unarmed Virtue is too powerful for the powers of Darknes, and a little light will dispel the shades below. But when the Righteousness of the righteous breaks forth as the light, and shineth more and more unto perfect day, then will the Sinners of the night, or of the day, either hide their heads, or themselves, for shame. If now these lesser
Luminaries

Luminaries are so dazzling and powerful, how much more the Sun and Moon in the Firmament? for so the Scripture Emblematically denotes Magistrates to be. When you Magistrates display the rays of Righteousness, you will not only discover all the corners of nastiness, but purge them too. Factious and seditious Sinners would shun the light of your presence, and dread your persons, and would not dare to blaspheme God and the King; there would be neither railing nor reviling in our streets, at least not against the Lord's Anointed.

1 Tim. 1.
9, 10.

The Apostle tells us, *The Law is not made for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners*; and amongst the rest that he instances in, these are some; *for Murderers of Fathers, for Manslayers, for Menstealers, for Liars, for perjured persons*; and *if there be any thing that is contrary to sound Doctrine*. And nothing can be more so, now adays, than binding Kings in chains, and Nobles in fetters of iron. Nothing can more subvert the Law of the Spirit of Life and of the Land, than those Principles which the *Papists* and our Dissenters at this day insist upon. And therefore would but our inferiour Magistrates be true to God and the King, to the Law of the Gospel, and to that Righteousness as now established by Law, we need not yet fear the Sons of *Corah*, nor all the Machinations or Designs of the Conventicle, or of the Conclave. But for this I shall farther account for, under the Applicatory part of this Sermon. And so I pass to my last Consideration, which is,

Thirdly. The satisfaction the Just-man hath in doing Judgment. *It is a joy to the just to do Judgment.* And herein Magistrates with other just men are concerned, and what is a comfort to one, is to either,
the

the testimonie of their Consciences, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdome, but by the Grace of God, they have managed the Affairs of Civil Government in the world; to allude to the Apostle's expression. For nothing more refreshes the Minde, than a reflex upon its own Innocency; nor any thing affords more solid peace and pleasure, than a good Conscience kept void of offence both towards God and man. The just Steward can look back upon his Disbursements, and upon his many and great employs and dealings with men, with a calm and a chearful minde: For he is ready to give up his his Account with Joy. Such Just Men they have confidence God-ward, and because they have been faithful both to him and to their Office, they will be able to hold up their heads in the day of Judgment.

Samuel, you know, he was not only a Prophet, but a Judge in *Israel*; and tho a wanton and licentious people were uneasie under his Presidency, and would not be satisfied with his management of Affairs, but sought by multitude and murmur to discharge him from his Government; yet this is his comfort, that as a just man he had done Judgment: and for this he hath not only the testimony of his Conscience, but he challenges it from the people too; *Behold, here I am, I witness against me; whose Ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blinde mine eye therewith?* That is, in other words, Wherein have I acted contrary to the Law? wherein have I been perjured? with whom have I basely comply'd to the subversion of Government, and the present Establishment? Thus in a triumphant manner he descends the place of Judicature, and resignes his Office, and satisfies

fies both the People and his own Conscience. This was that which comforted and buoy'd up the Spirit of *Job* under his sore Afflictions; and you know he was a great man in the East, and had others under his Conduct and Government, as you may collect from *Job* 31. 21.

It is possible that those that have sate on high, may be brought to sit in the dust, and that those that have judged others, may fall into condemnation: But such a reflex as this, that they have done Judgment, will renew their Joy even in the day of Sorrow.

These words, *It is a Joy to the Just to do Judgment*, have these various Paraphrases: that is, Just men do Judgment as *their work*; and that not an uneasie one, but as a labour of Love, and an office of Kindness and Charity to a distressed world. And 'tis their *joy to do Judgment*, implying, that it would be a pain and torment to them to do otherwise; and it is the very comfort of their Office, as well as the Duty of it, to do Judgment.

And now, Sirs, you that are to judge others, will do well to pass Judgment upon your selves, that the
 *Rom. 2. 1. * Obrade of St. *Paul* may never recoyl on either of you. But in the Application of this Discourse, I shall address my self to all my Auditory, as being as much concerned in the subsequent part, as you to whom I have particularly spoken. Beloved, it is granted by all,

First, That they are to be esteemed only just men, that act up, or according to *their* Principles; that is, to those measures, which they are convinced are Canons, or Rules, by which they are to square their actions. St. *Paul* had the testimony of his Conscience, that he had been an honest and just man, that he was always true to that way, in which he thought Righteousness was to be advanced. When he was a Pha-
 risee

risee he did as a Pharisee, the righteousness of a Pharisee he pursued, and would establish. And hence it is, that he declares for his own Justification, *I have lived in all good Conscience, even unto this day*; that is, he had acted according to his Convictions, he was sincere in his way; he was not so much a Fool or a Knave, as to betray his Cause, or abuse *his then* Conscience, by any base compliance, in contradiction to his Principles and Profession. And when afterward he had been blessed with a new Light, and a better Rule of Righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, he is as faithful and constant as ever he was before.

Sequaciousness is always a sign of a weak or a wicked minde; they are Children in Understanding, that are tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine. And they that will meddle with those that are given to change, have bad heads and worse hearts. A man cannot more plainly proclaim himself a Wretch and a Traitor, than to side with those that he knows are Enemies to his *Truth*, and would by all or any means subvert it. *Judas* is not so much branded for his Cowardise and his Covetousness, as for the Villany of betraying his Master and his Cause.

And now, my Brethren, I appeal to your own Consciences, Do you not believe that we are happy and blessed in the Government of a great and a gracious Prince? Are not the Laws of this Land, under which we live, not only just, but good? Are we not happy, and may be so under the present Establishment both in Church and State, as now settled by Law? What Priviledge can the Subject either reasonably desire, or enjoy, than what he hath? What as a Christian, or Member of a Christian Society, can any man as much as wish for, that he is not blest with in the Communion of this Reformed Church of England?

Brethren, you believe, I hope you do believe what I say: You are of our Communion, you are of us, and amongst us; you are Subjects of the same King, and Members of the same Church, we have hitherto walked together as Brethren: The Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy is our Bond of Peace. The Covenant which you made with God in your Baptism, by which you were admitted into Christ's Church and the Church of *England*, is that Unity of Spirit, by which we are united to Christ and to one another. I pray ask your own Consciences, and tell me, whether they would not accuse and condemn you for perfidious men, if any worldly respect should so far prevail upon you, as to be in any instance instrumental in your Sphere, to disturb or subvert a righteous and peaceable Establishment, either in Religion, Church or State.

The true and first Protestants of the *English* Nation under *Edward* the Sixth, *Queen Elizabeth*, King *James*, blessed God for our Reformation; and many of them rather parted with their Lives, than flinch from the conduct of so excellent a Church. And why, O why should we cast a sham upon our Forefathers! and disgrace a wise and holy Constitution, by yielding to those Beasts of prey, those devouring Wolves, those wild Foxes that would destroy our Vineyard, and make our Temples once again Dens of Thieves? Be this far from us, say you. But then what means this bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear! Why are the most Loyal and the most Faithful obraded with being Papists in Masquerade, and therefore rail'd at and revil'd for being faithful to God and their King, and that I cannot say by the Friends, but the Foes in our own Household? How comes it to pass that any of us should

should herd it with the Fanatick drove, and by noise, or Suffrage, or what is worse, by malicious Stories, and impudent Defamations, blacken that Constitution, and that Church, in which we live; and move, and have our being, yea our well-being; either as Men or Christians? It is apparent to all, that have Eyes to see, or Understandings to consider, that the divided Sects amongst us joyn hands and hearts together, and are so far Brethren, as to carry on their work of Iniquity, to turn once more a peaceable Land into Blood; and to effect what our more open enemies the Papists design'd, the ruin of our *English* Monarchy and Protestantism. O my Soul, come not into their Secret, unto their Assembly mine Honour be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, yea the best of men and of Princes, the Lords Anointed, and in their Self-will they digged down a wall; this they have done; and this they are complotting to do again. Cursed be their Anger, for it was and is fierce; and their wrath, for it was and is cruel. May God so divide them in *Jacob*, and scatter them in our *Israel*, that all their Counsels and Machinations may be brought to nought, and they may be as water spilt upon the ground. And let no man prosper that wishes ill to our *English* Sion.

Hold fast, my Brethren, the profession of your Faith without wavering, and be not impos'd upon by crafty men that lie in wait to deceive, and with fair Speeches and smooth Words would draw you off from your stedfastness. Remember that ye are Englishmen and Christians; be true therefore to your Sovereign as your Sovereign, and to your Church, as Reformed according to the truly antient Apostolick Form and Catholick Faith.

And I adde, *Secondly*. It argues our Sincerity, when

- Gal. 4. 18. when we are as zealous as sincere; *It is good*, saith the Apostle, *to be zealously affected always in a good thing*. For coldness of Affection, and indifferency of Minde, argues either the badness of our Cause, or our Hearts; either that we are not in the Right, or not right in the right way. It is a base and disingenuous affectation, to glory in that new-form'd Nickname, a
- Rev. 3. 16. *Linsie-wolfe man*; which is such an one whom Christ says, *He will spew out of his mouth*; and really he deserves to be hated and deserted by all that pretend to any Principle of Honesty. These Moderate Men (as sometimes they call themselves) are the Foes of our own Household; they as soon as any would give us up as a prey into the hands of our Enemies. All heads, and hearts, and hands, I am afraid, are now on work to pluck up and pull down, even that Vineyard which God hath planted, and that House which he owns as *his House of Prayer*. And now, if ever, ought we to stand in the gap, to show our selves true and sincere *Protestants*, and that not only in declaring against the *Conclave*, but the *Conventicle* and the *Classis*. These are the Vermin and the Vipers that would eat through their Mothers Belly. And being for these many years warm'd by the benign Influence and Government of a Gracious Prince, begin now to hiss, and more than to shew their Sting. Ah Lord! If we have any love for God or our Country, for Church or State, let us not unconcernedly look on, and see *both* running into Ruine, without giving a helping hand to prevent such a desolation. Let us be as active in the right way, as our Enemies are in the wrong. And let us who are of one Communion, be of one Heart and of one *Way*; let us joyn together as Brethren, that have the same Father and Mother, and the same Interest. Let us learn Zeal and Union,
- even

even from our Enemies; for so those are that would upon any account alter the present Establishment, under which we may be blessed in Body, Soul, and Estate.

But, my Brethren, if there are any amongst us that, like *Judas*, put their hands into the Dish with us, and then go forth and betray; let them assuredly know, that if they meet not with his Fate in this world, they may expect his Portion in the other.

F I N I S.
